



FORUM

Facts, Outcomes, & Research... Useful for Managing

EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION SURVEYS: YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD

BY BRUCE CHUNN

WHY SURVEY EMPLOYEES? Employee satisfaction surveys have been used successfully to help organizations improve job satisfaction levels. Sometimes barriers to a productive and content workplace are discovered and fixed, and often employers discover ways to help the employees develop a better working environment.

RETENTION OF STAFF - A survey conducted on over 2,200 professional employees in 20 different industries addressed the topic of employee retention. Over half the respondents indicated that exciting work and challenges, career growth, learning, and development were their primary reasons for staying with the current employer.¹

FAMILY ISSUES - A survey conducted in 1991 of federal employees looked specifically at how the use of family-friendly policies affects workers' job satisfaction. An ever-changing workforce creates new challenges to balancing the work environment and non-work priorities. It was determined that organizations that employed rigid practices regarding family responsibilities experience greater turnover. In addition, they found that employees who perceived their supervisors as unsupportive on family issues reported higher levels of stress, absenteeism, and lower job satisfaction.²

INNOVATIVE BEHAVIORS - A survey of schoolteachers focused on the affect on workers when employees promote new ideas within a workplace. The survey found that innovative behavior is likely to be obstructed by resisting co-workers who want to avoid the uncertainty of change.³ Thus, workplace tensions increase when people feel threatened by what they see as unnecessary change.

DIVERSITY - Watson Wyatt Worldwide reviewed the job satisfaction from a demographic perspective. They broke age into "Generation X" (under 30), Baby Boomers (30 to 50), and Old Boomers (50+). The findings showed a clear generational difference between these groups regarding attitudes towards the workplace. The Gen-X and Old Boomers both were more upbeat, while the Baby Boomers were generally less positive.⁴ On a more positive note, overall job satisfaction increased with each age group, posting percentages of 61 percent of Gen-X, 64 percent of Baby Boomers, and 71 percent of Old Boomers.⁵

LOCAL NEWS - There's something coming soon that will provide every Department of Corrections employee an opportunity to tell the Department how they feel about their employment situation. We have begun preparations for an agency-wide Job Satisfaction Survey to be conducted in the fall of 2004. The Department of Personnel (DOP) will provide this survey to ensure confidentiality. This is your opportunity, so take advantage of it and participate. Your responses will be totally confidential (no personal identification of any type) and will help identify the



FOR YOUR INFORMATION..

BOOK/PUBLICATION OF THE MONTH

Mail and Internet Survey: The Tailored Design Method, Second Edition, Don A. Dillman. 480 pp, November 1999. Available from Barnes & Noble for \$75.00. This is the book for professionals, researchers, and students who want to learn how to conduct effective surveys.

WEB SITE OF THE MONTH

Survey Monkey at:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/home.asp> - Build your own electronic survey at this website and distribute it to up to 100 people **FOR FREE!** You'll also get results compiled from the responses.

DEFINITION OF THE MONTH

Survey: The collection of information from a common group through interviews or the application of questionnaires to a representative sample of that group.

DOC MONTHLY STATISTICS AS OF JULY 31, 2004

CONFINEMENT POPULATION	17,535
Total Confinement	16,478
Work Release	627
Out of State Rented Beds	430
COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS POPULATION	
ACTIVE SUPERVISION	36,369
RMA	7,797
RMB	6,589
RMC	2,694
RMD	11,405
Unclassified	1,718
MONETARY	6,166
INACTIVE STATUS	16,189

ESCAPES FROM SECURITY LEVELS 2-5, FOR FY05

	Date	Type	Return
Coyote Ridge CC	07/14/04	Facility	07/15/04

For FY 2004 an escape from TPR on 6/13/04 was incorrectly reported as an escape from PLPR.

TO CONTACT PLANNING AND RESEARCH

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strengths and areas of improvement within our organization. You'll have the opportunity to contribute to this effort and each of your opinions is important. Please ensure your voice is heard. We'll be producing the results soon after the survey data has been collected and posting it for your review.

¹Journal of Environmental Health, Sandra Hagevik, *What keeps 'em?* Jan/Feb 2001, pg. 50.

²Rodgers, Fran and Rodgers, Charles, *How Flextime Eases Work/Family Tensions*, Aug 1989.

³Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, Onne Janssen, *Innovative behaviour and job involvement at the price of conflict and less satisfactory relations with co-workers*, Sep 2003.

⁴American Demographics, Michael Reinemer, *Work Happy*, Jul 1995.
⁵Ibid.